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The Implicit Imperialism of Democratic Peace

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Alexandros Zachariades ,

"Democracies don't attack each other" (Clinton 1994). This was the statement made by President Clinton in his 1994 State of the Union address, arguing that "ultimately the best strategy to ensure our security and to build a durable peace is to support the advance of democracy elsewhere" making this notion a vital underpinning of his foreign policy. This belief is a key tenet of the Democratic Peace Theory (hereafter DPT) which has also informed the Liberal peace theory. These two theories combined argue that democracies by nature of their institutional characteristics do not resort to violence with each other and are less prone to intrastate conflict (Paris 2004; 40-45). According to one scholar the Democratic Peace Theory "is the closest thing we have to an empirical law in the study of international relations" (Levy 1988; 88). The aim of the following essay is to contest the aforementioned notion that democracies and democratization are the surest route to peace. Instead, this essay argues that this notion is based on the post-Cold War *zeitgeist*. The triumphalism that followed the fall of Communism seemed to validate the claims of DPT. Based on the theory if the world was occupied solely by democracies war would become obsolete (Doyle 1983; Fukuyama 1989). Consequently, Western actors and institutions like the UN moved on to tie any peacebuilding effort to the transformation of the embattled community – which usually took the form a 'failed state' in need of salvation – into a liberal democracy (Boutros-Ghali 1992; Helman and Ratner 1993; Paris 2010; 342). Nonetheless, although established democracies might be more stable and peaceful the road to stabilization is difficult and as empirical cases have shown it leads in most cases to further conflict or to a highly volatile peace (Paris 2004;2010; Richmond 2006; Heathershaw 2008; McGinty 2010; Lewis 2010; Dodge 2013; Lewis et al.; 2018). Simultaneously, the discourse of liberal peacebuilding is implicitly promoting a new *standard of civilisation* that legitimizes forceful interventions. The failures of the US peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq clearly illustrated the shortcomings of the prevalent mode leading to US reluctance with the pursuit of further peacebuilding and democratization efforts. This enabled to some extent the emergence of a new illiberal mode of conflict management that has been in many cases more successful in attaining peace. This essay begins by defining peace, democracy and democratization. Subsequently, I briefly contextualize the end of the Cold War before providing an analysis of the concepts of DPT and the Liberal Peace that underpin the practices of democratization and liberal peacebuilding. At this point a critique of the democratic peace debate will be provided showcasing the implicit imperialism of the philosophical foundations of the democratic peace debate and the discursive creation of a dichotomizing and Orientalising narrative that posits the West as the ideal model upon which nondemocratic states need to attain. In the next sections, I will zero in on the American peacebuilding efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, arguably two of the most important and well-funded liberal peacebuilding missions, highlighting the shortcomings of the liberal piece that even led to further destabilization and conflict in the region (Dodge 2013; Gerges 2016). Finally, I focus on the emerging Authoritarian Conflict Management (ACM) practice, which in many cases can showcase a better track record than its liberal counterpart, thus, successfully challenging the notion of democracy and democratization as the surest road to peace (Lewis et al. 2018).

Definitions

Peace

The present piece considers peace as *negative peace* based on the definition offered by Johan Galtung (1967; 12) in his work *Theories of Peace*. Based on this definition negative peace equates to the "absence of organized collective violence". The term collective violence refers to violence between "major human groups"; states, classes and between racial and ethnic groups among others. It is therefore not only referring to interstate conflict but it is also referring to intra-state conflict.

Democracy

Democracy is widely associated in popular discourse with Ancient Greece and the Athenian state through the noble narrative of popular emancipation and 'direct popular rule' of the masses that form a *demos* (Hanson 1989; 68; Ober 2008). Nonetheless, the meaning of democracy remains a contested concept showcasing that since antiquity this notion has not remained static but its meaning has evolved taking many forms (Ober 2008; 3). Hence, to answer the question of whether democracies and democratization – the process by which states become democratic – is the surest route to peace, the notion of democracy has to be placed into context.

Today, by democracy most academics, politicians and public figures refer to a notion of *liberal democracy* (Huntington 1991; 16-8; Bertram 1995; Paris 2004; Heatershaw 2008; 601-2; Richmond MacGinty 2010; 391-4). Liberal democracy subscribes to the notions of contested and free elections, individual rights, the rule of law, which safeguards the right to ownership and the primacy of free markets (Barkawi and Laffey 1999; 408). Although there have been other forms of rule by the people i.e. other types of democracy throughout history (Downs 1987), the success of the liberal brand signifies the

success of the property owning classes to exploit the "tensions between 'democracy -rule by the people – and 'liberalism' the rights of the individual and of private property" in their favor branding democracy synonymous to the notion of *liberal democracy* (Barkawi and Laffey; 408; Bowles and Gintis 1987; Downs 1987; 122-124; Iber 2018). Therefore, the account of this essay will focus on liberal democracy.

Democratization and Peacebuilding

Democratization is the process of opening political space within a previously belligerent and authoritarian community. According to Jarstad (2008; 17), this process involves "improvements regarding contestation, participation and human rights". Nonetheless, although Jarstad's (2008) definition is offering a minimal conception of key aspects of the democratizing process, the prevalence of liberal within the West has also included market liberalization as a key component of this process. As Paris (1997; 55-6) notes from early on economic liberalization is at the heart of the internationalist ideology that promotes democratizations. Hence, the process of democratisation is defined here as interlinked with the process of economic liberalization.

Peacebuilding is broadly understood as the necessary actions anf steps that need to be undertaken within the political, institutional and social sphere to ensure and bring about lasting peace, which in the case of this essay is linked to an understanding of peace as the absence of violence (Bertram 1995; Jarstad 2008; 17). The two concepts although seemingly considered complimentary to each other they have often proven to be in contest with each other leading to further conflict in the cases of Angola, Iraq and Liberia (Jarstad 2008; 18). Simultaneously, there is always the danger of backsliding. Backsliding refers to the return of a state to authoritarianism after a process of democratization. The cases of Ethiopia after 2005 and Haiti between 1994 and 2005 offer clear illustrations of this danger. The aim of this essay is to argue that democratization, in spite of its nobleness as a concept, might lead to further destabilization and conflict. This is something acknowledged by scholars who are in favor of liberal norms and democratization (Ibid; Paris 2010).

The Transhistorical Notion of Democracy and the Liberal Peace

The "transhistorical notion" of democracies as inherently peaceful in their interactions with each other, (Doyle 1983; Fukuyama 1992; Ray 1995; Maoz 1998) which has reemerged within Western academia and has subsequently informed policy makers rests upon this fixated understanding of democracy as vitally interlinked with liberalism, neoliberal economics and the undemocratic practices of colonialism and imperialism (Barkawi and Laffey 1999; 407-8; Slobodian 2018; Iber 2018). It is necessary to understand the philosophical underpinnings of this concept and its development to comprehend the impact and assumptions of the liberal peace along with the context that led to its emergence. Without the US Cold War victory and the policy prescriptive assumptions of DPT, which inspired the notion of liberal peace, it is highly unlikely that the norms of humanitarian intervention, liberal state building and democratization would enjoy such widespread international support during the 1990s and the early 2000s. The aim of this section is to showcase the aforementioned, whilst offering a postcolonial critique in the liberal peace debate.

The Context

The end of the Cold War and the liberal victory over the Communist East led to a wave of liberal enthusiasm due the supposed fulfilment of the DPT. Fukuyama (1989; 3-4; 1992) argued that a worldwide consensus had been reached on the legitimacy of liberal democracy, thus, fulfilling Kant's liberal and teleological vision and reaching the "end of history". Based on the *zeitgeist* of the early 1990s liberal democracy emerged as a panacea for any type of conflict and this was reflected in the language employed not only by states but by supranational actors like the UN. The General Secretary of the UN, Boutros-Ghali, in his *Agenda for Peace* (1992; 32) claimed that the achievement of "true peace" is intrinsically linked to "democratic principles", calling for the promotion of democracy on a global scale. Therefore, the practice of peacekeeping, despite the pragmatic language employed by the UN, witnessed a transformation from simply facilitating dialogue between belligerents after a cease of hostilities to aspirations concerned with peacebuilding modeled upon a liberal democratic model (Heathershaw 2008; 601; Paris 2010). Liberal peacebuilding and democratization emerged in the discourse of the day as the only viable solution to any form of conflict and the optimism for their success was high, being themselves a byproduct of the DPT (Huntington 1991; Bertram 1995; 386-8; Sisk 2001; 785-7). Without the end of the Cold War it is highly unlikely that democratization and liberal peacebuilding would have gained the resonance it did since it provided a validating narrative – the end of the Cold War – along with a global hegemon – the USA – that subscribed to its notion. After all, liberal peacebuilding's prominence for 20 years was not based on experience or evidence but on the "dynamism of its discursive environment" (Heathershaw 2008; 260).

The Democratic and Liberal Peace Theories

The philosophical foundation of DPT is found in the work of Imannuel Kant (1795), and in his theory of 'perpetual peace'. According to Kant, constitutional republican states are more peaceful in their interactions with states of the same nature, hence, once all states adopt a system of republican constitutionalism, war would be abolished (Kant 1991; 99-108). Kant's perpetual peace theory becomes increasingly important after its revival by liberal IR scholars within the context of the

Cold War. The leading scholar among those individuals, Micheal W. Doyle (1983), used Kant's 'perpetual peace' as the foundation for his arguments that democracies as soon as they are established are inherently more peaceful due to their liberal character and frequent elections. Although he acknowledges that liberal democracies might go to war, however, they are uniquely willing to eschew the use of force in their relations with one another.

This view has come to be known as the 'Democratic Peace' thesis. The domestic characteristics of liberal democratic states dictate their behavior and since they inherently value "moral freedom and individual self-determination" they are bound to have peaceful relations with other liberal democracies (Owen 1994; 89; Doyle 2012; 129). Moreover, democracies are aiming not simply at survival in an anarchic international system but they are also aiming at *positive* peace (Owen 1994; 89). Positive peace is defined through a Lockean conception of International law that caters for the respect of sovereignty and human rights whilst promising sovereign equality which is firmly respected by democracies in their relations with other democracies (Doyle, 2010: 350; Doyle and Carlson, 2008; 125-6). Therefore, the creation of a peaceful international community can only be attained with the proliferation of democracies which perceive themselves as natural allies (Doyle 2005; 465). Large n-surveys were conducted along with the compliance of databases, like the Correlates of War (CoW), to back the messianic claims of the theory through scientific, statistical and quantified evidence (Singer 1987).

The DPT rests on two causal mechanisms. The first concerns the institutional nature of democratic states, which due to the checks and balances enshrined in democratic constitutions are reluctant to follow an aggressive foreign policy because of the threat of military defeat (Russet 1993; 38-40). Military defeat, its political and economic costs, the argument goes are too great a risk for a leader seeking reelection, hence, increasing the cost of going to war (Ibid; 40). Moravcsik (1993) pointed to the transformation of the European Economic Community into the European Union in 1992 as a justification of the thesis. He argued that the economic interdependence of the ECC member states created a *functional spillover effect* caused by the integration of trade and economic practices leading into political integration. Moravscik's (1993; 474-6) argument is in line with the Neoliberal Institutionalist IR scholars who argued that the development of these interdependent patterns will eventually lead to lasting peace and cooperation (Keohane & Nye 1987: 730). The second causal mechanism is linked to democratic norms of dialogue and cooperation. Democratic leaders, since they are accustomed to cooperative norms and values at home they are willing to employ them in the international realm when they deal with like-minded states and leaders. Consequently, this creates a democratic haven within the anarchic international system (Owen, 1994: 90-1; Oneal et al. 1996).

The prominence of DPT and its messianic narrative regarding the end of interstate conflict prompted academics to research whether a similar phenomenon occurred in terms of *intra*state conflict. Rummel (1995; 5) argued that the ability of democracies to resolve social conflicts through "voting, negotiations, compromise and mediation" and an inclusive democratic culture rather than violence, made them inherently more stable against the threat of civil strife. Similarly, both Zartman (1993; 327) and Gurr (1993; 138) argued that within a democracy, marginalized communities are more likely to seek justice through "nonviolent political means". The claims of the Liberal Peace Theory, as it came to be known, just like its predecessor were backed by robust statistical data by the International Peace Research Institute in Oslo that established democracies face a lesser possibility against the threat of civil war (Herge et al. 2001).

Critique

The critique offered here begins with the illustration of Kant's inherent racism that affects his work on perpetual peace. This racism underscores a notion of Western superiority. As Buzan and Lawson (2013; 621) argue in their account of the long 19th century (1789-1914) the "ideologies of progress", of which liberalism was one, were a vital element of the global transformation witnessed in that era. These ideologies were rooted in the ideals of the *Enlightenment*, which aimed at improving the human stock driving them intro modernity and had a dark side that was often linked to imperialism and colonialism. Liberalism's interconnection with imperialism is evident through the writings of Immanuel Kant. Kant's racism is explicit in his Anthropology lecture notes (1781-82). In his own words the white race "contains all incentives and talents in itself" whilst the American indigenous people are inherently indifferent and lazy and to acquire no culture (Kant 2012; 301). Moving on, in his view, the "Negro race . . . acquire[s] culture, but only a culture of slaves; that is, they allow themselves to be trained" whereas the "Hindus" finally "acquire culture in the highest degree, but only in the arts and not in the sciences. They never raise it up to abstract concepts" (Kant 2012; 302-3). Kant's beliefs of Western superiority become explicit in *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Aim* (1784) where he argues that "one will discover a regular progress in the constitution of states on our continent (which will probably give law, eventually, to all the others)" (Kant 1784). Therefore, Kant's notion of liberal peace hides an implicit imperialism with racist underpinnings concerning Western superiority.

By analyzing the discourse of liberal peacebuilding, we can find similar connotations. As Heathershaw (2008; 603) argues the discourse of liberal peacebuilding is constructed in the context of a global bifurcation of an 'enemy-other', linked to religious fundamentalism and nationalism, and an 'ideal-other' linked to a rational, ethical and civic identity. It therefore, constructs a world by which an implicit *standard of civilisation* between the West and the rest exists, particularly through

the succeeding and 'failed states'. This *standard* offers the necessary discourse to legitimate interventions on the grounds of neoliberal democracy aimed at saving a state from 'failure' (Dodge 2013; 1198). We once more see the construction of the East by the West through an Orientalised set of lenses that highlights its perceived backwardness. Although most academics advocating for liberal peacebuilding are neither cynics nor imperialists and genuinely believe that liberal democracy can better the life of many people across the globe, the language of liberal peacebuilding and democratisation gives rise to this bifurcated narrative (Heathershaw 2008; 603).

The juxtaposition of the embattled community with liberal democracy as its ideal 'other' is based either totally or significantly on a Western archetype. Most importantly the eventual polity and identity will have to be compatible with liberalism and neoliberal economics (Paris 2004; 45-6; Barkawi 2004; 157). The case of Tunisia is illustrative. Tunisia is arguably the most promising state, in terms of its potential to democratize, to emerge from the upheaval of the Arab Spring (Gerges 2014). In its efforts to achieve democracy along with some semblance of financial and economic stability it has turned towards Western economic institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for support. This culminated in a program of liberal economic reforms as part of its transition to democracy (Ibid; Reuters 2018). The push towards further liberalization of its economy was dictated by the aggressive terms of the International Monetary Fund to gain access to funds necessary for the government's stability, highlights the interconnectedness between liberalization and democratization. (Reuters 2018; Economist 2018; Chandoul 2018). The tension between democracy and liberal market economics has even been stressed out by scholars advocating liberal peacebuilding model arguing that the overemphasis on economic liberalization runs the risk of endangering the whole peacebuilding process (Paris 1997; 2004; 2010).

In many cases, democratization and liberal peacebuilding fail to grasp the cultural and structural specificities of a region, thus, leading to an unstable democratization process that could lead to further destabilization and conflict. Theorists of democratization like Jarstad (2008) and Sisk (2008) have placed extensive emphasis on the role of local identities and how they can become part of an *integrative* or *power sharing* approach of democratisation. These are notions that go further than rigid consociationalism found in traditional peacekeeping solution. This process envisages the creation of political parties that run across an ethnic, racial or religious divide essentially outlining a framework for social reengineering whilst managing the conflict (Sisk 2008; 148-9). What is missing from their accounts is the role of neoliberal economics and the primacy they attain in the minds of key Western actors (Dodge 2013).

After all even proponents of the liberal peace have acknowledged that a state during democratization runs a greater risk of becoming involved in an international war than democracies and nondemocracies and is in general the most unstable form of polity (Mansfield & Snyder; 1995; Snyder 2000). In many cases neoliberal economic reform leads to further destabilization (Dodge 2013).

The Implications of 'Liberal Peace'

The aim of the following section is twofold; the first is to showcase the limitations of liberal peacebuilding and democratisation through the examples of the US efforts to democratize Afghanistan and Iraq; the second is to present the emerging of an alternative mode of conflict management that is authoritarian in nature and offers a credible challenge to the various forms of liberal peace building.

The Failed Peace: Iraq and Afghanistan

The claim of democracy and democratisation to provide the 'surest pathway' to peace is challenged by the empirical case studies of Iraq and Afghanistan. If one looks at the post 9/11 interventions of the USA this is clearly illustrated in the rhetoric employed by the US leadership. In the aftermath of 9/11 attack President Bush used the term crusade as one of the first key characterization of his 'War on Terror' (Journal 2001). Additionally, in his address to the armed forces before the war in Iraq juxtaposed the American with their Iraqi counterparts arguing that the US military is a liberator whereas its enemy has no respect for the rules of war (Bush 2003). Simultaneously, in his accounts President Bush and the US administration framed both the Afghanistan and the Iraq interventions in the language of liberal democracy accusing the Taliban and the Baathist regime as violators of human rights promising to emancipate the Afghan and Iraqi people from the tyranny they were experiencing (Dodge 2013; 1199). The poor choice of words by the American President gave the semblance of a civilizing mission (Bush 2003; Lears 2003).

Proponents of liberal peacebuilding (Paris and Sisk 2009; 11; Newman 2009; 33) have argued that because the initial interventions did not constitute a response to civil war or to support a peace settlement and were not triggered by requests from inside the country they "are profoundly different from those of most state building operations". Nonetheless, apart from the framing of the interventions in liberal discourse the US and its allies and the UN in the case of Afghanistan moved on to implement a maximalist neoliberal approach to the rebuilding and democratisation of Iraq and Afghanistan (Dodge 2013; 1202). The extent of the US commitment is illustrated by the sums of money they invested in these regions. Eleven years after the initial intervention in 2012 the US government requested more than $100 billion dollars for Afghanistan rebuilding program (Ibid; 1203-5).

Writing from a realist perspective, Desch (2008; 42-3) argues that the USA's liberal tradition led it to practice "imprudent vehemence" abroad in futile attempts of messianism (Ibid; 42-3). As the cases of Iraq and Afghanistan show the US's attempt to democratically transform the region has failed whilst it will not be held accountable for the consequences of its actions. Instead, because of these actions the region has been further destabilised making it fragile to Great Power intervention and civil strife in a stark parallel to the imperial era. As Gerges (2016; 8-9) argued, the US invasion of Iraq, drove sectarian sections high. The aggressive liberal peacebuilding that attacked the Sunni dominated state institutions – the dismantlement of the Iraqi army is a clear illustration of this process – led many Sunni Muslims towards fundamentalist groups since they felt that through the process of De-Baathification they were marginalized, ostracized from the political sphere and threatened in their own country (Dodge 2013; 1203-6). The boycott to the 2005 constitutional elections along with the election Nuri al-Maliki highlight Sunni disenchantment with the post-Saddam Iraq (Gerges 2016; 11-14). This disillusionment was a result of the American invasion and subsequently fueled the ranks of ISIS with dissatisfied Sunni Muslims, who had often passed from the cells of Abu Ghraib. The withdrawal of US troops in 2009, along with the turmoil in the region in the aftermath of the Arab Spring created a power vacuum in the region that ISIS moved to fill quickly (Ibid; 15-7). Henceforward, in this case we see how the neoliberal and maximalist efforts pursued by the US in the region not only did they not produce but they also gravely destabilized the Levant and the Middle East.

As Dodge (2013; 1192) argues if the prevalent model of peacebuilding that has been conditioned through several interventions since 1989 has failed to produce stability and prosperity in the "two of the most extended and generously funded interventions of the twenty-first century", then its ability to inform policy will come under scrutiny and it has.

The Emerging Authoritarian Conflict Management Model

Paris (2010; 362-4) argued that any form of peacebuilding is inherently to some extent liberal, thus, the challenge does not lie in finding an alternative approach to liberal peacebuilding but in the reform of existing approaches. This may be true, however, US failures in Iraq and Afghanistan have created a great sense of disillusionment with liberal peacebuilding. This feeling must be prevalent among US foreign policy makers as the Libyan intervention in 2011. The US and NATO, acting in execution of the UNSC resolution 1973, imposed a no fly-zone on Libya that led to the fall of Qadafi bringing about regime change (Alisson 2013; 796). Nonetheless, unlike Iraq and Afghanistan the US did not commit any troops to bring about a liberal peace. The reluctance of the US to employ the rhetoric of liberal emancipation also makes its appearance in the case of Syria where apart from arming anti-Assad groups and occasional airstrikes it has undertaken no meaningful action with the aim of the removal of the Assad regime. The US seem reluctant to employ their force in support of liberal peace. Although international institutions and transnational civil society remain at least nominally committed to liberal peacebuilding models, support for liberal peacebuilding among Western states is low (Lewis et al. 2018; 14-5).

The strategic quagmires of Iraq and Afghanistan have taken their toll giving rise to an alternative and authoritarian mode of conflict management. Authoritarian Conflict Management (ACM), seeks to illustrate the practices of strong authoritarian states in the international system in their internal conflicts. The aim of ACM is to "prevent, de-escalate or terminate violent conflict within a state through the hegemonic control of public discourse, space and economic resources" refuting the liberal notions of compromise, negotiation and power-sharing. Many emerging and authoritarian powers like Russia, China, Turkey and Sri Lanka facing rebellions are unwilling to abide by the norm of internationalizing their internal conflicts or constraining their sovereignty and use of force (Lewis et al. 2018.; 14-5) Instead, they invoke sovereignty norms that allow them to pursuit "authoritarian modes of conflict management inside the state" (Ibid; 14).

ACM is becoming more and more widespread within the international system. Internationally negotiated settlements, the norm of civil war termination during the 1990s have been in decline since the 2000s (Ibid; 2). The rise of authoritarian powers, like Russia and China in the global scene meant that by the 2010s the norms of peace and conflict became increasingly contested (Alisson 2013; Ibid;2). Both Russia and China have employed a hardline approach in their responses to the internal conflicts they faced in Chechnya and Xinjiang respectively (Richmond and Tellidis 2011; 5-6). These responses are in turn influencing the way these actors approach conflict management, which is characterised by the contestation of liberal norms and practices in the international system (Acharya, 2011; Cooley, 2015; Wolff and Zimmermann, 2016).Additionally, Lutwak's (1999) notion of 'giving war a chance' has made a reappearance in the global scene with analysts arguing that the historical norm of "wars being resolved primarily through military victories was being restored" (Kovacs and Svensson, 2013; Ibid; 2). As the military victories in Chechnya and Sri Lanka have illustrated the primacy of liberal peace as the "surest" pathway to peace is being contested. Of course, this peace is not linked to a notion of the 'positive' liberal peace but to a negative peace. Nonetheless, in comparison to Afghanistan and Iraq they succeeded in stopping widespread violence.

Essentially, ACM aims at the prevention, de-escalation or termination of organised armed rebellion or other mass social violence through methods that "eschew genuine negotiations among parties to the conflict, reject international mediation and constraints on the use of force, disregard calls to address underlying structural causes of conflict" (Ibid;14). It relies on the hierarchical nature of the state apparatus to with a focus on coercion (Ibid; 13-5). Although ACM relies on state violence, it is not simply a military campaign of 'all-out war' it involves economic and spatial measures (Diaz and Murshed,

2013). The Chechenisation policy of the Russian state has involved the heavy control of the public discourse, the increased state funding in the region and the promotion of a state-sponsored version of Islam (Matejova 2013). So far it seems to be working.

Conclusion

This essay was not an attempt to contest the success and the merits of established democracies as a form of polity. Instead, the aim of this essay was to contest the idea that democracy and democratization constitute the surest path to peace. Instead, this essay argued that this idea rose to prominence due to the liberal victory at the end of the Cold War without any substantial empirical backing or a tested democratization and peacebuilding model. The triumphalism that followed the fall of Communism validated in the eyes of scholars and policymakers alike the claims of the DPT. Liberal peacebuilding democratization and the general notion of liberal peace stemmed from the claims of the DPT. Democratization became a panacea but as the cases of Iraq and Afghanistan have showed the concept of liberal peacebuilding is highly problematic. Moreover, the primacy of economic liberalization, which in many cases precedes democratic reforms is endangering the very democratic element of the peacebuilding process (Paris 2004). Simultaneously, the discourse of liberal peacebuilding is implicitly imperialist and racist due to its Kantian routes. The dichotomization of the liberal discourse into an ideal-other and an enemy-other is also highly problematic because it leads to the discursive creation of an Orientalizing narrative that posits the West as the ideal model upon which nondemocratic states should be transformed. Nonetheless, the empirical shortcoming of democratization and liberal peacebuilding along with the reluctance of the US to engage in a promotion of liberal norms in the way they did in the 1990s has given space for the emergence of an alternative authoritarian peacebuilding model. The rise of authoritarian states like Russia and China has also given rise to an alternative conflict management model that offers a credible challenge to the liberal peacebuilding model. Although it offers primarily a negative peace it is currently more successful than many democratic conflict management procedures that have been unable to deliver any form of peace. It is therefore, safe to say that the dominant idea that democratization is not the only game in town anymore.

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